



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# The Coastal Program

## *Caring for Our Coastal Habitats*

As Americans flock to the coasts to enjoy its beauty and benefit from its recreational and economic opportunities, communities and resource managers face the challenge of integrating economic development with conservation of coastal resources.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's **Coastal Program** helps communities to meet this challenge.

### The Coastal Program's Accomplishments

Since 1994, the Coastal Program and its partners have restored over:

- 93,700 acres of coastal wetlands
- 24,500 acres of coastal uplands
- 961 miles of coastal streamside habitat
- and protected 1.02 million acres of coastal habitat

### Accomplishments in FY 2003

- 4,680 acres of coastal wetlands
- 550 acres of coastal uplands
- 51 miles of coastal streamside habitat
- 10 fish passage barriers removed



### The Coastal Program Approach

- Partners with coastal communities to improve the health of their watersheds for fish, wildlife and people.
- Identifies, evaluates and maps important habitat and provides technical assistance.
- Assesses the health of coastal habitats and the wildlife resources dependent upon them.
- Restores habitat.
- Protects sensitive habitats.

### Project Examples:

**Gulf of Maine** - Provided funding for 11 private landowners to restore habitat within 8 watersheds, including reestablishment of fish passage to 22 miles of historic salmon habitat. Other restoration techniques included fencing, in-channel stream restoration, erosion control and tree plantings.

**Chesapeake Bay** - Provided technical assistance in the form of stream assessments and restoration training as well as design and construction demonstrations for landowners and resource agencies throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

**Delaware Bay** - Identified key migratory songbird habitat along the Demarva Peninsula



to facilitate conservation of critical migratory stopover areas.

**South Carolina Coast** - Contributed to the permanent protection of approximately 7,000 acres of coastal upland and wetland habitats via permanent conservation easements on private and public lands. The Coastal Program identified and characterized target sites based on fish and wildlife resource values. Cooperating non-governmental organizations included The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and the Historic Ricefields Association.

**Puget Sound, Washington** - Provided technical and financial assistance to the Nisqually Tribe to restore 31 acres of salt marsh at Red Salmon Slough. This restoration project should benefit the threatened Nisqually Chinook salmon, since estuarine restoration is identified as the highest priority in its Recovery Plan. The project also complements habitat management at the nearby Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.

**Pacific Islands, Hawaii** - Helped implement the Waipa Community's watershed restoration plan to remove alien riparian and coastal vegetation and replant with native species grown in local greenhouses. Partners included the Waipa Foundation and the Kamehameha Schools.

**Florida Gulf Coast** - Restored 200 acres of shallow estuarine habitat by re-establishing water circulation. This benefitted 900 acres of intertidal and subtidal habitat at Fort Desoto Park, Florida.

**San Diego, California** - Partnered with the Bolsa Chica Conservancy to remove the non-native, invasive iceplant from 20 acres of dunes to assist with the recovery of the rare dune plant community in the Bolsa Chica lowlands. The iceplant is being removed by hand using a largely volunteer work force.

**Texas Coast** - Restored 29 acres of eroding islands within Dickinson Bay. These islands will provide nesting sites for colonial waterbirds.



## Coastal Program Locations



*Note: Numbers refer to USFWS Regions*

### Why Care For Our Coasts?

Our Nation's coasts provide important fish and wildlife habitat far beyond their limited geographic extent. Coastal ecosystems comprise less than 10% of the land area, but support a much larger percentage of the Nation's:

- Migratory songbirds (85%)
- Fish and shellfish (77%)
- Waterfowl (75%)
- Shorebirds (92%)
- Threatened and endangered species (45%)

### Threats to Coastal Habitats

- Habitat loss due to urbanization
- Fishery habitat loss
- Frequent oil spills
- Wetland losses of 50-90% from historic levels
- Nutrient over-enrichment
- Dams and culverts which restrict or limit the movement of fish and wildlife

For more information, contact the Division of Fish and Wildlife Management and Habitat Restoration, Branch of Habitat Restoration at 703/358 2201. Our website at <http://www.fws.gov/cep/cepcode.html> contains information about Coastal Program activities, accomplishments and contacts.